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the stone. A little adjustment was required to balance the pebble by getting its middle part against the end of the body, and then the animal began to back out of the pit, so pushing the pebble before, or rather behind it, up the side, and to a point a short way beyond the margin, where it was abandoned. A small furrow —two to three inches long—was described in the sand by the moving stone, which furrow was curved from the point of departure. The stone was kept perfectly balanced during the entire progress, which was quite rapid. Each of the three pebbles was thus removed, the grub returning each time and backing it out of the pit. The experiment was repeated a number of times and always with the same result. Some well-rounded stones were selected in order to make the difficulty of balancing greater, but this made no difference in the action of the larva, a round pebble being balanced and removed quite as readily as a flat one. It was a curious and amusing spectacle to witness the odd little creature thus backing the accurately poised impediments out of its domicile, and then returning to put its house in order once more. The correctness of the early observations of M. Bonet is thus fully confirmed by Dr. McCook's experiments.

OCTOBER 31.

The President, Dr. LEIDY, in the chair.

Thirty-six persons present.

The resignation of Dr. Chas. Schaeffer as Curator was received and accepted.

Actinosphærium Eichhornii.—Prof. LEIDY remarked that he had noticed in an aquarium what appeared to be eggs, adherent to the edges of the leaves of *Vallisneria*, from the Schuylkill River. On examining the egg-like bodies with a lens, they were observed to be covered with delicate rays. On transferring some of the bodies to the field of the microscope, they proved to be giant specimens of the larger sun-animalcule, *Actinosphærium Eichhornii.* They measured from three-fourths to one millimetre in diameter, independent of the rays, which extended from one-fourth to half a millimetre more. One of the smaller individuals contained four water-fleas, Daphnias, a third of a millimetre long, and one of the larger contained six of these. The *Actinosphærium* appears to be tenacious of life; several specimens having been retained alive and in good condition for three days, in a drop of water in an animalcule cage. They had discharged the Daphnias, but retained their original size. One of oval form measured 1 mm. long by 0.75 mm. broad. The smaller ones measured 0.75 mm. in diameter. After another day they appeared in good condition, but the rays were contracted so as to be about half the original length, and many had a minute granular ball at the end, apparently effete matter thrown off from them. At this time the animalcules were returned to the aquarium.

November 7.

The President, Dr. Leidy, in the chair.

Thirty persons present.

The following were presented for publication :—

"A review of Swainson's Genera of Fishes," by Joseph Swain.

"Ants as Beneficial Insecticides," by the Rev. Henry C. McCook, D. D.

The deaths of Benjamin V. Marsh and Isaac Comly, M. D., members, were announced.

On Topaz and Biotite.—Prof. Leidy exhibited several interesting minerals. One of these was a large crystal of topaz, of dark and decided amethystine hue from Brazil. The yellow topaz is the common kind and this by heating assumes a pink or rose color. He had never seen or read of another of the same color. The crystal is about 2¾ inches in length. The other mineral consisted of plates of muscovite containing hexagonal plates of biotite remarkable for their regularity and beauty. The crystals of biotite ranged from a millimetre to 50 mm. in breadth. The specimens are from Macon Co., N. C. Similar specimens are found in West Philadelphia, but he had seen none from this locality in which the crystals of biotite were so regular.

November 14.

The President, Dr. Leidy, in the chair.

Thirty-two persons present.

The death of J. Norris Emlen, a member, was announced.

On Actinosphærium, etc.—Prof. Leidy stated that *Actinosphærium Eichhornii*, on which he had made some remarks a few weeks ago, still existed in large numbers in an aquarium in his possession. The animals though in active condition appeared to be habitually sedentary, remaining adherent to the edges of leaves of *Vallisneria* and other aquatic plants, and often, as on a pedicle